

**January 9, 2007**

**Press Release** | Contact: Danielle Langone (202) 225-6416

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WASHINGTON, DC—U.S. Congressman Peter DeFazio voted today for a bill to implement the recommendations of the bipartisan 9/11 Commission, which he has been urging since the Commission's report was published in 2004. The bill will enhance homeland security at airports, in our airways, and in our ports, and will allow our first responders to better communicate with one another.

The House passed the bill this evening by a vote of 299 to 128.

“One of my highest priorities has been to implement the common-sense recommendations of the 9/11 Commission,” DeFazio said. “Improving explosive detection at airports, scanning containers before they reach our ports, and inspecting cargo on our airplanes will go a long way toward securing our nation against an attack. Today's legislation will also help our first responders communicate with one another in an emergency, improving rescue efforts and helping keep Americans safer.”

The bill includes a number of long-overdue steps to substantially improve homeland security, including:

- Funding to meet the highest priority need of our police, fire, and other emergency first responders for state-of-the-art interoperable communications equipment.
- Accelerating the installation of in-line explosive detection systems for checked baggage at the nation's airports and provides a dedicated \$1 billion funding stream.
- Creating a Checkpoint Screening Security Fund that will provide \$250 million to improve explosive detection systems at passenger checkpoints at the nation's airports.
- Phasing in a requirement for 100 percent inspection scanning of U.S.-bound shipping containers at foreign ports over the next five years.
- Creates an Office of Appeals and Redress to assist passengers who are wrongly delayed or prohibited from boarding a flight.
- Restoring the rights and protections for TSA employees and whistleblowers.

In addition, the bill would alter the formula for key Homeland Security grant programs to ensure the majority of the funds it distributes is based on risk. The current formula has resulted in low-population states like Wyoming receiving more Homeland Security funds on a per capita basis than high threat areas like New York City or Washington, DC. The change in formula reflects a 9/11 Commission recommendation that the formula for fund allocation be based almost entirely on risk.

The legislation also included measures to improve existing programs to prevent the proliferation of WMDs and to establish a more robust Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board.

